



Date: October 2009  
Public Information Office: +93 (0)70-234-236 x4369  
E-mail: [kabulusaidinformation@usaid.gov](mailto:kabulusaidinformation@usaid.gov)  
<http://afghanistan.usaid.gov>

## FACT SHEET

### Afghanistan Small and Medium Enterprise Development *Market Information*

#### OVERVIEW

USAID's Afghanistan Small and Medium Enterprise Development (ASMED) project increases opportunities for trade, employment, and investment by improving private sector productivity. The market information component provides market knowledge to Afghan entrepreneurs. To improve the quantity and quality of business intelligence available, ASMED conducted, collected, and distributed sector and sub-sector analyses and market assessments. ASMED now assists Afghan businesses to exploit the market opportunities that these reports identified. By sponsoring trade and investment conferences, buyer missions, and participation at trade fairs, the project facilitates domestic and foreign market linkages for SMEs, thereby improving value chains in key sectors such as carpets, marble, wool and cashmere, agribusiness, gemstones, and handicrafts.

#### ACTIVITIES

- **Market assessments** – Generating and disseminating market information to the private sector, including analyses of potential high-growth sectors in Afghanistan; conducting market research to improve access to finance for small businesses; and implementing a market information system for entrepreneurs in high-risk areas. Reports include opportunity analyses for women's enterprises, and an evaluation of business development services available in Hirat. Also training local service firms to conduct market and financial feasibility studies on behalf of private sector clients.
- **Trade fair attendance** – Enabling Afghan businesses in targeted sectors to attend trade fairs through technical assistance and financial support. These events provide international business learning experiences, and generate significant direct sales and future contracts.
- **Business procurement platform** – In collaboration with Peace Dividend Trust (PDT), creating a business-to-business procurement directory, linking domestic and international buyers to Afghan businesses. Financially assisting a call center to add new vendors and update member information.
- **Match-making services and events** – Acting as a broker for Afghan SMEs interested in joining business associations, contracting business development services, accessing financing and capital resources, and identifying and developing new markets.
- **Trade and investment conferences** – In cooperation with partner organizations, like the Afghan Chamber of Commerce and Industries (ACCI), organizing knowledge-sharing events that invite potential investors and trading partners.
- **Rebranding Afghanistan** – Enhancing Afghanistan's business image to encourage foreign direct investment, import substitution, and export capacity.

#### RESULTS

- Conducted and/or sponsored 20 market assessments and disseminated results to stakeholders, sharing information about business development, market linkages, and investment opportunities.
- Facilitated the sale of more than \$30M of Afghan products for sponsored SMEs at national and international trade shows in export destinations such as Germany, India, the U.A.E., and the U.S.
- Linked at least 64 SMEs to bank loans and equity resources.
- The Peace Dividend Trust B2B platform generated an estimated \$200M in local procurement in 2008. Its directory now lists more than 3,000 local businesses.
- Over 1,000 supported firms increased their value by diversifying into higher value goods and services.
- More than 1,500 firms invested in improved technology, improving enterprise productivity.